Curbing of expenditure of various Ministries

176. SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have undertaken an exercise to examine the expenditure of various departments in order to curb the same;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof and what areas have been identified where the expenditure could be cut down; and

(c) what is the approximate amount of savings expected to be made thereby?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EXPENDITURE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI B. K. GADHVI): (a) to (c) The expenditure programme of each Ministry|Department is scrutinised and reviewed every year with a view to controlling expenditure, as part of normal budgetary exercise and provisions are made in the Budget for the minimum necessary expenditure. Besides this, as a part of zero base budgeting Ministires|Departments have been advised to undertake a more thorough review of all their on-going programmes and rank them in the order of priority to facilitate reduction or elimination of expenditure which are of low priority and application of larger funds to items of high priority. The impact of these exercises will be known over a period of years.

Collection of income-tax

177. SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the collection of income-tax is going on in accordance with the targets fixed;

(b) if not, what are the reasons therefor; and

(c) what administrative measures have been taken to achieve maximum collection of revenue on this account and to check malpractices within the department?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI AJIT PANJA): (a) and (b) The collection of Income-tax (including Corporation tax) upto September, 1988 amounted to Rs. 2492.90 crores which represents 32.13 per cent of the budget target as against 35 per cent fixed by the Board. The shortfall is mainly due to the amendment of Income-tax Act under which the tax payers are required to pay only 20 per cent of the Advance Tax upto September, 1988 as against 33-1|3 per cent payable in June, 1987 and September, 1987.

(c) The following administrative measures have been taken to achieve maximum collection of revenue:—

(i) More powers have been delegated to Chief Commissioners of Income-tax so that they may be able to take decision on important matters without obtaining the order of the Board.

(ii) In the Action Plan for 1988-89, emphasis has been laid on collection and it has been stipulated that the demand to be carried forward as on 1.4.89 should be 10 per cent less than the demand brought forward as on 1.4.88.

(iii) The Chief Commissioners of Income-tax|Directors General (Investigation) have been instructed to enforce collection immediately after the demand falls due. The Commissioners of Income-tax (Appeals) have also been asked to decide important appeals on priority so that the disputes are sorted out and demand is realised quickly.

As regards steps taken to check malpractices within the department, the Vigilance wing of the depart-

ment has been strengthened and stricter supervision and control are being enforced.

Interim Report of the Ninth Finance Commission

178. SHRI CHITTA BASU: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have since received the interim report of the Ninth Finance Commission; and

(b) if so, what action has been taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EXPENDITURE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI B. K. GADHVI): (a) and (b) The first Report of the Ninth Finance Commission covering the year 1989-90 was received on 29th July, 1988 and this was placed on the Table of the House along with Explanatory Memorandum on the Action taken on the recommendations of the Commission on 2nd September, 1988.

Clearance of Bakreshwar Thermal Project in West Bengal

179. SHRI CHITTA BASU: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Government have since cleared the Bakreshwar Thermal Project in West Bengal from environmental angle; and

(b) if the answer to part (a) above be in the negative, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI Z. R. ANSARI): (a) No, Sir.

(b) The Thermal Power Appraisal Committee of the Ministry of Environment and Forests visited the site from 23rd to 25th June, 1988. Some essential details like availability of ground water, pollution control measures, etc. have been sought from the West Bengal State Electricity Board.

Clearance of Haldia Petrochemical Project

180. SHRI CHITTA BASU: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Government have finally cleared the Haldia Petrochemical Project in West Bengal;

(b) whether the I.D.B.I. has been asked to prepare the financing pattern for an investment of Rs. 850 crores;

(c) whether the original project report has since been modified; and

(d) if so, what are the details of modifications?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO): (a) to (d) The Industrial Development Bank of India (IDBI) has reported that financial institutions have not so far cleared the project of M/s. Haldia Petrochemicals Limited. IDBI has also not received any revised projections relating to the project from the company.

Sarkaria Commission Recommendations

181. SHRI CHITTA BASU: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Government have since completed the examination of the recommendations of Sarkaria Commission on Centre-State relations;

(b) if so, whether Government have finally decided to take follow-up action thereon; and